



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
DIVISION OF STATE POLICE  
Uniform Crime Reporting



## Ten Steps to Effective Records Management

To reduce the likelihood of incomplete or inaccurate crime data, it is important that law enforcement agencies are following appropriate procedures for effective records management.

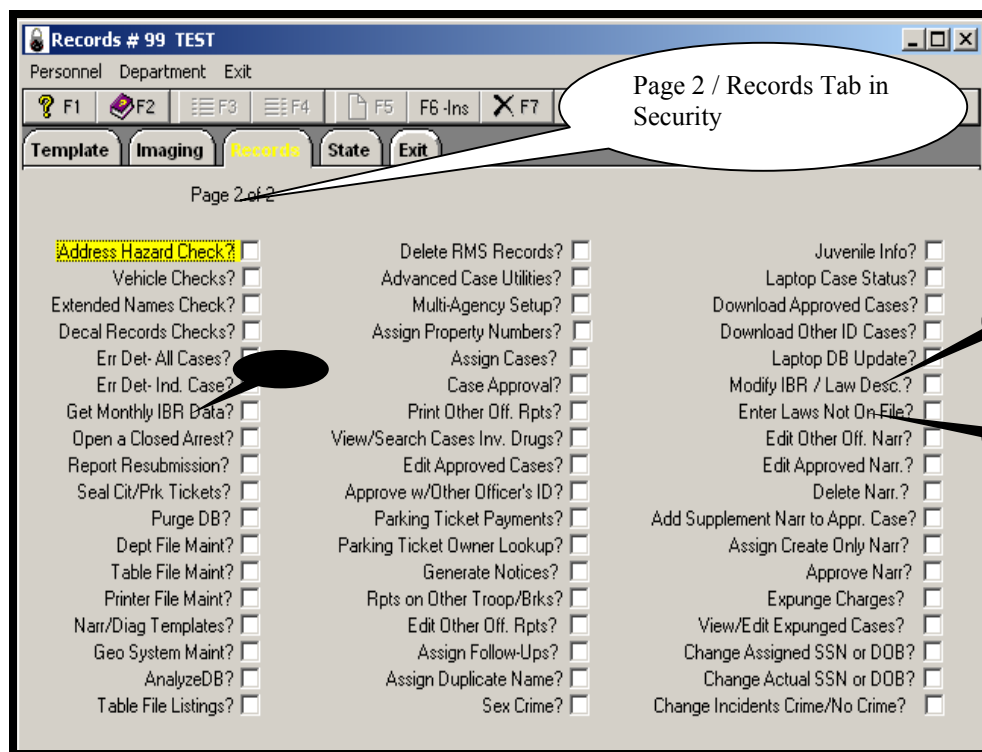
### 1. Security Rights

Security rights are an important consideration in maintaining a Records Management System. To reduce the likelihood of inaccurate data, it is recommended that security rights are carefully reviewed and analyzed. Listed below are suggested IBR security settings to be locked and only the UCR/RMS System Administer/s should have security rights to the three-(3) settings listed below. It is suggested that the preliminary officer does not have security rights to these settings. Authorized personnel should do this only.

Get Monthly IBR Data

Modify IBR / Law Desc.

Enter Laws Not On File



*Screen representations may vary depending on the version of the software that is installed.*

## **Effective Records Management**

### **2. Standard Report of Rhode Island General Laws/IBR Codes**

To enforce a well-built foundation for a standardized IBR crime collection system it was necessary to evaluate each state statute and correlate an appropriate IBR code to meet the national standards and definitions provided by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

With the support of the Department of Attorney General, and the Education and Training Services Unit of the FBI, we have completed this phase of the project. This file should be used by the preliminary officer when entering data in the records management system and is the standard file that should be used in reporting crime data to the Rhode Island State Police.

Please note that several state statutes are listed on the report multiple times, this is due to the fact that state statute definitions cross the NIBRS definitions. In these cases, the preliminary officer should select the conforming offense according to the NIBRS offense classification.

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Important Note: Should you detect any discrepancies in the IBR codes, please contact the Uniform Crime Reporting Unit at 444-1156.

3. All calls for service, regardless of their seriousness, should be initially recorded in a manner that clearly defines the referral of the call.
4. A written report should be prepared or computer entry is made showing the full details of the offense as disclosed by investigation. The preliminary officer should carefully review written report/computer entry.
5. A supervisor should error check incident/arrest report to verify accuracy and completeness.
6. Agency should have a procedure for classifying and scoring all incidents/arrests in accordance with the National Incident Based Reporting System.
7. A tracking procedure should be in place to determine that arrests, clearances, and/or unfounded cases are reported accurately.
8. Agency should have a written procedure in place to double-check each report to ensure that case is submitted correctly for UCR purposes. Law enforcement agencies must have a proven, effective program and have instituted acceptable error checking procedures and quality control procedures.

## Effective Records Management

### **Data Quality Issues**

Listed below are criteria for flagging data for reasonableness. This will assist in identifying issues before sending a mass mailing to local law enforcement agencies. Areas that are of concern and should be review by law enforcement included:

- ✓ Aggravated Assaults greater than Simple Assaults
- ✓ Motor vehicle thefts with low number of vehicles other than automobiles
- ✓ Rapes higher than Robberies
- ✓ Plus or minus 15% change at 6 and 12 month intervals for individual offense categories – but also taking into account agency population, offense and month to month changes
- ✓ Burglaries higher than Larcenies
- ✓ Weapons used in Aggravated Assaults – high number of personal weapons
- ✓ Forcible entry Burglary should be the largest number; however, non- forcible and attempted should also be reported
- ✓ Other suggested reports: Larceny of Structure; Agg. Assaults w/o injuries or weapons; Simple Assaults w/ minor injuries w/o weapons

Agency should keep the Uniform Crime Reporting Guideline book up-to-date. Future updates to the UCR guidelines will be distributed by Newsletter and posted on the Rhode Island State Police web site. Updates and data quality issues should be retained and filed in this Guideline book.

9. Agency should create (written or computer) a summary report each month/quarter prior to submitting data to the UCR Unit. Also, copies of crime reports should be retained and filed at the local law enforcement agency for verification.
10. Agency should have a procedure in place to ensure timely crime reporting submissions to the Rhode Island State Police in accordance with data submission requirements.

While following these ten steps does not guarantee the integrity of crime data, it does indicate that law enforcement agencies are following appropriate procedures for effective records management.